

Erie County Ethics Board

July Meeting Minutes

July 9, 2017 8 a.m.

16th Floor Rath Building

MEMBERS:

Steven Schwartz, Chair
Rebecca Town, Secretary
Miles Gresham (via phone)
Warren Galloway
Leslie Ortiz-Fogg, Ex-Officio

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Chris Trapp, Vice-Chair

STAFF:

Vianne Uthman, Administrative Staff

OTHERS PRESENT:

Ross Kostecky & George McNerney, Legislature Office (recording)

1. Meeting call to order at 8:04 a.m.
2. June 2017 meeting minutes approved on motion by Galloway, seconded by Town
3. Website Updates / Email Updates (Uthman /Town /Schwartz):
 - i. Request for opinions/actions:
 - i. Request for Code of Ethics for training of Workforce Investment Board directed to Personnel.
 - ii. FOIL Requests:
 - i. Some of the Ward request of 5/30/17 for elected officials are under review but any that are ready will be sent following the July 2014 meeting.
 - ii. The Board has received a Goldstein request of 6/22/17 for Pridgeon that identifies him as a member of the Buffalo City Council. It is not clear if the request was sent in error. Schwartz wrote back to inquire as to what information they are seeking from the county. The Board will await clarification before any action is taken.
 - iii. Other communications:
 - i. Candidates who have taken necessary steps to qualify for public office or received contributions have to fill out a financial disclosure in August for Board to review at the September meeting.
4. Old Business:
 - i. In Morton vs. County of Erie, et al, the Federal suit regarding fine imposed for violation of financial disclosure laws, the Judge dismissed the 1st amendment claim. The procedural due process claim remains intact.
 - ii. Return of 2016 Financial Disclosure Forms (Uthman)
 - a. The Board sent out 10 delinquent notices warning a fine would be imposed if financial disclosures were not submitted 8 have been filed, one was removed and one appealed so the disclosure date was extended. There are no delinquent forms for the Board to deal with at this point.
 - iii. Trapp has disseminated information regarding restrictions on Ethics Board members' involvement in political activities. Board members are advised that involvement should be limited to work as a citizen and not to include a formal role with decision making abilities.

5. New Business (Schwartz):
 - i. Review of 2016 Disclosures (July 19, 2017)
 - ii. Schwartz and Uthman sent out 19 follow up letters. One extension was authorized. Chair/Vice Chair are authorized to review additional disclosures and followups.
 - iii. State Financial Disclosure Forms will not be accepted by the Board. One individual filed a State form that was returned and the county form subsequently submitted.
 - iv. Schwartz drafted a follow up form to send in instances where a gift was disclosed but value not identified. The Board approved the form template.
6. Motion to adjourn 8:26 a.m.
7. August meeting cancelled unless needed. Next meeting scheduled for Monday September 11, 2017 at 8 a.m.
8. Additional 2017 meeting dates: October 2, 2017
November 6, 2017
December 4, 2017